GUIDE TO THE SQ19 TUCANO FILE

[This file contains specific data on the Tucano, including the Arapaso, Bara, Buhagana, Carapana, Cubeo, Cueretu, Desana, Macuna, Pamoa, (Tatuyo), Piratapuyo, Tucano, Tuyuca, Uaina, Uanana, Uasona, Yahuna, and Yapua (Japua). All of the above tribes speak languages or dialects belonging to the Eastern division of the Tucanoan or Betoyan language family.

The Tucano live in the northwest Amazon region of Colombia and Brazil in the basin of the Vaupés river and its tributaries. They share this region with peoples from several other language families including Arawakan and Cariban. The groups in the Vaupés river basin have many culture traits in common and are often classified as one main culture. They represent a tropical forest culture, subsisting on slash and burn cultivation of bitter manioc, fishing, and some hunting.

Typically, the Tucano live in large multi-gamily houses (maloca) whose members belong to one patrilineal, exogamous sib. Quite freqeuntly, one maloca comprises an entire settlement although occasionally some sib members live in single family dwellings near the maloca. Settlements are widely dispersed on the banks of rivers and streams andrange in size from 20-100 members. The sib is the most important social, religious and political unit, and is generally localized in one community. Its members cooperate economically, and it is the only social unit with any form of leader or headman. Furthermore, it is the group the Tucano most frequently identify with. The sibs are hierarchically organized into phratries which are also exogamous. Tribal identification is weak or absent and according to 5: Goldman, if it exists, it is more an expression of common culture than of

political or territorial unity. In fact, there is no administrative organization or leadership on a level higher than the sib group. There are several different languages and dialects spoken among the Tucano. Because of sib and phratry exogamy, there is frequent intermarriage among linguistic groups, and, as a result, most Tucano are multilingual. The language spoken by the Tucano proper is the lingua franca for the entire area.

There are 7 sources in the Tucano file. Three of the sources, 4: Silva, 5: Goldman and 6: Moser and Tayler, provide a broad survey of the culture. The remaining 4 sources, 1, 2, and 3: Fulop, and 7: Sorensen are specialized in subject matter. 1: Fulop is an excellent study of Tucano kinship terminology, 2: Fulop is a collection of nine Tucano folk-tales and myths, 3: Fulop is a Tucano cosmogonical tale which is particularly interesting because of the elements of Western civilization which have been woven into the story. This source also includes a general summary of Tucano material culture. All three sources have been translated from the Spanish. 4: Silva was prepared by a missionary and provides the most extensive cultural and historical summary. The author discusses tribal groupings, material culture, social organization, religion, and kinship. It has been translated from the Portuguese. 5: Goldman was prepared by an ethnologist and concentrates on one subgroup of the Tucano, the Cubeo. The author emphasizes social structure and ceremonial patterns but provides a general summary of the culture as background for his analysis. 6: Moser and Tayler is mainly a description of the authors' trip through Tucano country. It provides a very general description of everyday life and a more extensive description of agricultural practices. 7: Sorensen concerns multilingualism among the tribes of the Northwest Amazon basin.

Because of the nature of the source material processed for this file, which generally considers the Tucano and other groups in the area as forming one major culture, of which each language group forms an interdependent part, it has

generally been impracticable to separate the various groups during the analysis procedure. Therefore, the materials have been analyzed only for the SQ19 Tucano file. Data on other language groups in the area therefore will be found in this file, but are not labelled as such. See 7: Sorensen for an explanation of this problem.

The file was processed between 1969 and 1974.]